



SMALL GROUP WEEKLY
DEVOTIONAL MATERIAL



Week 3
15 - 21 August 2021

ENCOUNTER GOD TODAY

Daily Bible readings, a memory verse and a prayer for individual contemplation
Weekly worship song, reflection and small group questions

ENCOUNTER GOD TODAY!

Living a life of purpose in these unprecedented times

CONTENT:

Week 3: The power of free gifts, salvation and forgiveness – Xhanti Mhlubulwana

Colossians 3: 13 (Forgiveness) **Sunday 15 August**

Week 4: It shouldn't be about who is right but what is right – Ntsokolo Selebe

1 Thessalonians 5:22 (Conscience) **Sunday 22 August**

Week 5: A void that only Christ can fill – Rev Kamogelo Monoametsi

Matthew 6: 33the (Best Life) **Sunday 29 August**



Sunday 15 August

Week 3

The Power of free gifts, salvation and forgiveness

BIBLE READING:

Read Colossians 3:12-17 ... Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ...

PRAISE AND WORSHIP:

Let's worship our God with the following You Tube song:
🎵 **This Is Grace (I Am Forgiven)** | New Creation Worship <https://youtu.be/tnPLFD8oOA4>

Reflection by Xhanti Mhlubulwana

Theme for reflections: The power of free gifts, salvation, and forgiveness. Biblical text base, Colossians 3:13. Chapter 3 Colossians Contents Outline: In Col. 3:1-4 the Colossians are exhorted to be heavenly-minded. In Col. 3:5-11

call to mortify all corrupt affections. **In Col. 3:12-17 our reflections the call is to live in mutual love, forbearance, and forgiveness.** Finally, Col. 3:18-25 to practice the duties of wives and husbands, children, parents, and servants.

In my reading of the text Col. 3:13 (NIV) “Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.” This verse cannot be understood in its context without understanding and achieving first Col. 3:12 (NIV) “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.”

We must not only ‘do no hurt’ to any, but we must do the good we can to all. John Wesley stated it better for me, “Do all the good you can, in all the ways you can, to all the souls you can, in every place you can, at all the times you can, with all the zeal you can, as long as ever you can.” Those who are the elect of God, holy and beloved, **ought to be lowly, compassionate, and forgiving towards all.** Living as ‘Those Made Alive in Christ’. Living as those who ‘have been raised with Christ’. While in this world, where there is so much corruption in our hearts, quarrels will sometimes arise. **But it is our duty to forgive one another, imitating the forgiveness through which we are saved.** Let the peace of God rule in your hearts; it is of His working in all who are His.

The Lord’s prayer as recorded in Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4 the fifth petition contained in the prayer, states “forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.” Unforgiveness is a sin that blocks our fellowship with God. As God’s children we must do something about the sin of unforgiveness that blocks our fellowship with God. Sometimes forgiving those who have hurt us can be hard to do. But Scripture tells us we must, for God to forgive us.

So how do we forgive? How do we let go of the pain and suffering that someone has caused us? What about the harm and wrongs we may have caused others? How do we know that we are okay with God? And that we are forgiven? All through Scripture we can see in these Bible verses about forgiveness that if we are faithful to God in prayer and confessing our sins, we are able to grow in spiritual maturity. We can humble ourselves and ask forgiveness of those we have hurt. We are also able to give grace and give forgiveness, as our Heavenly Father has forgiven us.

Learning to release bitterness and forgive others is an important part of spiritual, emotional, psychological, and physical comprehensive detox. When we embrace what the bible says about forgiveness, **that’s when we can begin to experience true healing.** It may not always be easy to forget the past but look toward the future and what is ahead. God is gracious and merciful and will not fail you in your time of frustration and anger towards someone but provides peace and clarity to forgive. He will not leave you in your sadness for wronging another but will give you strength to confess your wrong and ask to be forgiven. May the following and above bible verses about forgiveness cause you to pause in prayer and speak with God for a moment, to seek His forgiveness, and to give forgiveness. Love one another as God has loved you, let go of the past, and look ahead towards the light of Messiah.

Why forgive, forgiving others is essential:

- i. **We are commanded to forgive,** Romans 12:19 (NIV) “Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord.”
- ii. **The example of Christ commands us to forgive,** ‘if we are in Christ’, Luke 23:34 (NIV) “Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.”
- iii. **We forgive to prosper** spiritually, Matthew 18:35 (NIV) “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”
- iv. **Forgiveness of others makes us to be a testimony** as per our text for reflection, Col. 3:13 (NIV) “Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”
- v. **We forgive to receive forgiveness,** Matthew 6:15 (NIV) “But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.”

Thanksgiving to God, helps to make us agreeable to all men. The gospel is the word of Christ. Many have the word, but it dwells in them poorly; it has no power over them. The soul prospers when we are full of the Scriptures and of the grace of Christ. But when we sing psalms, we must be affected with what we sing. *Whatever we are employed about, let us do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, and in believing dependence on him.*

May God Bless You Abundantly, as you ponder on forgiveness!

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS:

1. Think and list your struggles about forgiveness and or failure to forgive. (*Cinga, wenze uluhlu lwezinto ezingamava wakho malunga nokuxolela, nokuxolelwa, yinto le yenza kubenzima ukuxolela kuwe?*)
2. Why did you fail to forgive? (*Yintoni eyenze woyiswe ukuxolela?*)
3. What do you plan to do to be victorious in forgiving? (*Uzakwenza ntoni ukuze woyise ubenzima bokungaxoleli?*)
4. Think and list your victories about forgiveness and or success to forgive? How did you achieve victory? What principles did you learn? (*Cinga, wenze uluhlu xa uphumelele ukuxolela, nokuxolelwa, yintoni eyenza wakwazi ukuxolela?*)
5. List the people you need to forgive. Why do you need to forgive them? (*Yenza uluhlu lwabantu ekusafuneka ubaxolele. Kutheni kufuneka ubaxolele nje, benze ntoni?*)



DAILY BIBLE READING:

Monday

Memory Verse: 1 Timothy 1:15 “Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.”

Prayer: Glory to God in the highest for Your plan of salvation and praise Your holy name that I have become Your child, simply because I trusted in the saving work of Christ on Calvary. Thank You, for laying out Your wonderful plan in such simple terms that even I can understand it. In His name, I fully accept this glorious, trustworthy truth. Enable me to be a worthy witness of Christ’s great redeeming sacrifice for the whole world, that whoever calls on the name of the Lord, will be saved. In Jesus’ name, **AMEN.** [Source: <https://prayer.knowing-jesus.com/1-Timothy/115>]

Tuesday

Memory Verse: 1 John 1:8-10 “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.”

Prayer: Father, I embrace that I have sinned. I understand there remains ungodliness within me. I confess I’m not like You, as Your light has revealed this to me. So, Father, I confess my sin before You. (Take a moment and confess as many specific sins as you can think of.) Thank You that as soon as my confession leaves my lips, then I am forgiven. As soon as the thought of confession crosses my mind...the moment my heart moves toward You in humility, the Holy Spirit is applying the blood of Jesus to my life. I don’t want to say or imply that I’ve never sinned or that I have attained a place of sinless perfection. This would turn You into a liar. It would also hurt my relationship with You and others. So Holy Spirit, remind me to acknowledge my weakness and failures before the Father and other people in Jesus’ name, **AMEN.**

Wednesday

Memory Verse: 1 John 2:1;6 “My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.”... “Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.”

Prayer: Great God in heaven, I believe in you and trust in you. I want to walk as Jesus walked. I want to abide in You. Be with me as I go about my day. Help me to make wise decisions as I work to be more like you. **AMEN.**

Thursday

Memory Verse: Matthew 6:14-15 “For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.”

Prayer: Holy and exalted God, thank you for your forgiveness and grace. Help me let go of all bitterness and vindictiveness and forgive those who have harmed me. May your work of redemption and grace touch their hearts as it has mine. In Jesus’ name, I pray. **AMEN.**



Friday

Memory Verse: Colossians 3:13 “Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”

Prayer: All powerful and merciful God, give me a heart of forgiveness. When others offend me, help me repay them with love and forgiveness. I know I am sinful, yet you forgive me completely. When I’m struggling to forgive others, help me focus on the sins you bore on the cross for me. I ask for the courage and willingness to forgive as completely as you’ve forgiven me. **AMEN.**

Saturday

Memory Verse: 1 John 1:7 "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin."

Prayer: Loving Father, I want to live in the light of Your love each day of my life. I long to know You more and more each day and to live and move and have my being in You. I pray that I may grow more and more like Jesus with every passing day. Thank You that I was bought with the price of Christ's precious blood and that in Him I have received everlasting light and life and hope and love, in His name I pray, **AMEN.** [Source: <https://prayer.knowing-jesus.com/1-john/1/7/>]



It is important for parents to take time to lead the conversations of family time and to be honest with their children in these conversations.

BY JENNY BLAKE – CHILDREN'S PASTOR
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Sunday 15th August

Pray daily: Set up family time for prayer and devotions and stick to this arrangement. All devotions should always begin by with a prayer. Ask a family member to pray or one of the children.

Scripture Reading: Colossians 3: 13 Allow children/teens to read out loud for the family.

Activity/Family Moment:

As we were in another lockdown, I felt the pressures of being on top of everyone in the house, I can only imagine what it was like with little children. There were a lot of disagreements in my home, and it all came down to being a bit house bound and everyone having to deal with their own worries, stresses, and the like. When I realized that we were all going through something I realized that the arguments where not coming from a place of anger but rather hurt.

- Have you and your household experienced anything like this?
- How do each of you deal with life troubles?
- Have you said sorry to those who you may have been snappy with?
- Take this moment to apologize to each other.

Activity: Human knot - Everyone stands in a circle.

Place your right hand into the middle of the circle and grab someone's hand opposite you.

Do the same with your left hand, taking someone else's hand.

Work together to untangle yourselves. You should eventually become a circle all facing the same way.

Remember to bear with one another as the scripture states!

THURSDAYS IN BLACK

During Women's Month, we would like to stand and support the women in this country and in our congregation by wearing the "Thursdays in Black" button and wearing black on Thursdays for the month of August.

PLEDGE: By supporting 'Thursdays in Black' I stand:

- In protest against systems and societies that encourage violence in any form,
- In solidarity with 1 in 4 women worldwide who face violence in their lives.
- In mourning for men, women and children who are harmed and killed in sexual violence.
- For awareness and information about the challenges of gender-based violence.
- In the hope that a different reality is possible.

By making this pledge I undertake to stand up and make a difference in the world where I live, work and play. (<https://www.thursdaysinblack.co.za/about-0>)

CHALLENGE: Join us by wearing black along with your small group, family, or colleagues every Thursday and send us a photo of yourselves to kerryw@bmc.org.za so we can stand together during the month of August.

